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structures, is more durable than that of which these monuments were made; and, unless the material used in their construction is much more capable of resisting elementary action, it needs no prophet to tell how they will look a century hence.

N.

Serology.

THE FAMILY AS A WORK OF ART.

NO. IV.

To seek an absolute definition of Art may suit the ambition of the anatomist of shadows; but can in no way help us through the labyrinth of this world's realities. To draw cobwebs out of words has been the delight of too many in every calling in life; but what does it avail those who look upon words as the representatives of things, and who merely consult them as microscopes, through which to penetrate to the conditions of things underlying them. With this view of the matter, we shall define Art as the ascension to the Beautiful, through the most simple and economical means; and this definition, without being arbitrary, will suit our idea of its application to the formation of a home.

There is no word in our language that has more significance than that of Home. It still continues to overpower the heart and mellow it into tears, notwithstanding the degenerating and revolutionary influences which have grown out of an idiotic and perverse devotion to the wild schemes of trade and commerce. It still continues to be the true nursery of great and good men, and the only place of rest for the impoverished as well as the affluent. To it we recur gratefully when years have whitened us, and left deep lines of care behind them, and written their history upon our wrinkled faces. Let us not then forget that Home is sacred, that it is the central point not only of our pleasures and affections, but of our truest religious aspiration; and by the teachings and influences of which our whole life is colored for good or for evil, for happiness or misery, for life or death.

True Art has nothing to do with extravagance, it has nothing to do with the adulation of men's vanities or conceits, as they interpret themselves through the medium of gaudy houses, gaudy furniture, or gaudy dresses. It is the true moral arbitrator between men's æsthetic wants and their artificial and meretricious wants—it strikes a natural balance between bad taste and good taste, between the vulgar rich man and the refined poor man; it equalizes men's conditions by showing that the Beautiful is as attainable by the poor as by the rich: and in this respect it is nothing more than the expression of the natural order of things. Health is not dependent on the accident of wealth, comeliness of form is not, happiness is not, genius is not; in fact, there is no virtue or quality in nature that is so. The most that wealth can do is to facilitate the outward growth of artistic taste and beauty, provided they exist inwardly, otherwise it appears in the works of men as weeds appear amongst flowers. The vicious belief that everything can be bought with money, that every humble effort is useless without it, that we

are to suppress our thoughts, feelings, and actions, until we have a pecuniary channel through which to pilot them, bespeaks a rotten condition of things, a moral cowardice, which cripples our energies every day, and begets feuds and distractions not only in society, but even embitters the tenderest ties of family life. We know women who are unbiblical enough to look upon their husbands as godless because they are not omnipotent enough to control at will, and for their benefit, the whole treasury of Mammon; and yet these women are not potent enough themselves to put artistically a button on one's shirt, to mend a hole in one's stocking, or to cook a dish that would not commit suicide on the rude palate of an Irish hod-carrier.

If Art did not stand on a moral fulcrum; if it did not teach men to be better, wiser, and more contented, by elevating their thoughts, by spiritualizing their feelings, and by showing how, without reference to their pecuniary inequalities, they can attain to the Beautiful, it would be a humbug. And this it is not, as we shall proceed to show.

Art, in its application to the home, is concerned with the architecture of the dwelling itself, with the furniture of use and embellishment within it, with the dresses of its inmates, and with the general order and distribution of the whole. The dwelling that is gorgeously forced up before the public eye by the agency of money alone, attracts momentarily the gaze of the crowd—the wonder of the stranger, and reminds the wayfarer of his poverty. But it is no more an index to the happiness and refinement of those within, than its pretensions are in accordance with the laws of Art. It being the wonder of a day, the dust of its mortality is soon dissipated by time, and its ponderous ostentation crushed out by a more impudent rival. And thus it is that the money-engendered and Artless structures of the day, come in like Gullivers and go out like Liliputians, without anything more than the monstrosities of our momentary viciousness and inborn barbarity. It is thus that the labors of one generation instead of becoming the permanent investment of another, are but so much rubbish that has to be removed away, and with it the memory of those who created it. A fearful disjuncture this of two factors that should be inseparable, and one, too, having pernicious consequences upon the reverential parts of our nature. The modern substitution of the legislation of money for that of Art in the erection of dwellings, has over-ridden and forestalled the natural workings of man's tastes, and has begotten a destructive disparity between the family and its dwelling. The exorbitant pecuniary demands of the latter have impeded and disturbed the moral growth and prosperity of the former to such an extent, that our youth of both sexes are kept apart from conjugal incorporation with each other, lest the necessities of life might force upon them that becoming humility which Christ taught, and the idolatry of mammon repudiates; lest they might be forced to love the obscurity of their homes, and forego the purchased admiration of libertines in the world. The shell or dwelling of the Family should correspond to its own intrinsic nature, and should be confined to the legitimate service

of its legitimate wants. Apart from this, it is an excrescence, and poisonous to its well-being. Now, is there any real, moral or artistic connection between the extravagant tawdrinesses of a modern dwelling called fashionable and the modest acquisitions of an æsthetically constituted Family—does the protection which it requires from the elements without, and the basis which it requires for its happiness within, bear any analogy to the ill-shaped masses of stone, brick and mortar, which are aggregated together in our city, like turbulent mountains thrown up by some wild convulsion of nature? They would seem to us to be the fruits of misdirected ambition and means, misdirected intellect and love of notoriety, and an unnecessary and injurious drain upon the already over-taxed energies of mankind. They are the modern representatives of the dark human powers of antiquity, as they historically appear to us in the despotisms of the theocratic, military, and monarchical régimes, and like them the modern dwellings proclaim the restless and vaulting ambition of misery and discontent, and not the happy and contented humility of a normal state of mind and morals.

Man ought to know that if his spirit is not on a bed of roses, his body must be on one of thorns, that a neglected duty begets a pointless and a remorseful effort which ends in painful discords. Let no man, therefore, envy the modern dwelling; it is but a mass of gilded matter, it is in violation of the laws of Art, and the moral requirements of a well and permanently constituted Family, and has no more bearing upon the health, happiness and well-being of man individually, in the Family or society, than the elaborated sepulchres of Greenwood Cemetery.

In our next we shall speak of the other two branches of our subject.

OUR WATERING-PLACES.

Now, that the autumnal leaves are falling thickly and drearily upon the retiring footsteps of the disciples of pleasure, as they move away from our watering-places, let us indulge in a few desultory reflections as to their uses and abuses.

It was an honest instinct of human nature, and one claiming our gratitude, which made the watering-place a natural appendix of city life; it is in keeping with the hygienic necessities of our existence, and has beneficial effects not only corporeally, but mentally. There is a liberty more dear to us, more soothing to our struggles in life, than that which is written on parchments, and serves as a Bible to the rabid politician; it is the liberty of giving free scope and free exercise to the natural laws of our own nature; it is the liberty of escaping from bad air, bad company, bad avocations, and the indurating exigencies to which a badly constructed state of society so often subject us. A winter's imprisonment in a thickly-populated city—a winter's cares and embroilments, a winter's frigidity and irritation can only be compensated for, by timely recreations in green fields, in majestic forests, and along the sweetly rolling streams of our rural districts. Wonder not, then, gentle reader, if we sigh to be away from our city incarceration as soon as the leafy month of June